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PSCA/DAG. 394

Authority ST/AI/326: 28-12-81
By M.BG, UNARCH, Date 2-12-87

2 November 1962

Some Aspects of the Cuban Crisis As They Affect Disarmament I.

1. Khrushchev and Kennedy Link Cuban Crisis With Disarmament

One major aspect of Mr. Khrushchev's momentous decision to dismantle Soviet missile bases in Cuba and to accept U.N. verification of their removal, is that for the very first time the Organization has been invited to inspect the carrying out of a nuclear disarmament measure. It is also the first time that the setting up of U.N. inspection machinery has been invoked in a crisis directly confronting the United States and the Soviet Union. This is in itself a most significant development. 1/

Moreover, if as a result of the initiative of the Secretary-General the acute tension in the Caribbean is removed, there is hope that the United States and the Soviet Union, together with the other countries, will renew their efforts to achieve a disarmament agreement in a spirit of greater mutual comprehension, especially in light of the messages exchanged between Mr. Khrushchev and Mr. Kennedy. They reveal a great similarity of thinking on the urgent need for resuming negotiations on general and specific disarmament measures.

In his messages of 27 and 28 October to Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Khrushchev expressed the hope that after a liquidation of the Cuban crisis it might be possible to find a reasonable solution to the following problems: nuclear test ban and a détente between NATO and Warsaw Treaty countries. He also indicated his desire to continue to exchange views on the prohibition of atomic and thermonuclear weapons, general disarmament and other problems relating to relaxation of international tension.

For his part Mr. Kennedy, in his message to Mr. Khrushchev of 28 October and his statement of the same day, indicated that priority should be given to a nuclear test ban and the proliferation of nuclear weapons on earth and in outer space. He also mentioned the need of paying urgent attention to the military confrontation between the Warsaw Pact and NATO countries and wider measures of disarmament.

2. The Immediate Task: A Nuclear Test Ban. Other Measures.

In their urgent call for cessation of tests, Khrushchev and Kennedy have been joined by Macmillan. 2/ The Prime Minister wrote to Mr. Khrushchev on 28 October

1/ The situation after Mr. Castro's speech of 1 November as it affects problems of inspection will be considered in a separate paper.

2/ Canada, in connexion with the debate on draft resolution A/C.1/L.310, now before the First Committee, proposed that the General Assembly should welcome the intention to find a speedy settlement of the remaining differences on the question of the cessation of nuclear tests, "declared in Chairman Khrushchev's letter of 27 October to President Kennedy, President Kennedy's letter of 28 October to Chairman Khrushchev and Prime Minister Macmillan's letter to Chairman Khrushchev of 28 October."

that "we should be able to reach an early conclusion of an agreement about the beginning of tests of nuclear weapons on which much progress has already been made...", and in the Commons on 30 October he saw a possibility for useful negotiations with the Soviet Union on a nuclear test ban "now that the Russians have accepted the principle of independent verification."

According to British sources (The Guardian, 1 November) the United States and Britain may soon make a joint declaration, unilaterally binding themselves never to be the first to carry out tests underwater, in the atmosphere, or in outer space after a given date early next year with the hope that such a declaration, while a useful step forward in itself, would help to bring nearer an agreement to ban all tests, including underground ones. Reportedly, the Soviet Union is looking for a technical solution and may, in the near future, make new proposals on control which envisage the use of automatic sealed seismic stations.

As to a détente in the European sector where the NATO and Warsaw Treaty armies are confronting each other, the fact that both Khrushchev and Kennedy have mentioned the need for relaxation in this sector may mean that the old Soviet proposal for a non-aggression pact between the two alliances, which is on the agenda of the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee, will be approached with greater urgency.

The same may be true of the dissemination of nuclear weapons, a question that was mentioned explicitly by Mr. Kennedy, while Mr. Khrushchev spoke in general of the prohibition of atomic and thermo-nuclear weapons.

The 28 October messages by Khrushchev and Kennedy did not raise explicitly the general question of military bases, but in the wake of the Cuban events this question is likely to come up time and again.

3. The Question of Nuclear Missile Bases Overseas

The reaction of the U.S. Government to the introduction of Soviet nuclear missiles into the Western Hemisphere was prompted by the realization that such a step was bound to upset the world's delicate strategic balance.

Said President Kennedy in his address to the nation of 22 October:

"Nuclear weapons are so destructive and ballistic missiles are so swift that any substantially increased possibility of their use or any sudden change in their deployment may well be regarded as a definite threat to peace. For many years both the Soviet Union and the United States, recognizing this fact, have deployed strategic nuclear weapons with great care, never upsetting the precarious status quo which insured that these weapons would not be used in the absence of some vital challenge."

But is it to be expected that the status quo will be preserved indefinitely? Already before the recent Cuban events some observers felt that attempts on the part of the Soviet Union to increase and diversify her own deterrent capacity were to be expected. Because, according to reputable estimates, although she possessed a huge capacity to threaten Europe with a large army and some 700 medium-range ballistic missiles of ranges up to 2,000 miles (the West has only about 250 of these), in the

field of ICBM's she was believed to be cutclassed. In fact, the United States was credited as having about 500 ICBM missiles and 630 long-range bombers against some 75 such missiles and 200 bombers of the Soviet Union. (Michael Howard, The Sunday Times, 28 October 1962. The estimates are by the London Institute for Strategic Studies).

Obviously, it is not easy for governments to make military developments coincide with the long-term interests of political stability. Furthermore, this stability can be upset in more than one way.

World security would, nevertheless, gain if the great Powers were to undertake not to establish any new bases outside their territories. This course would go some way towards meeting the traditional position of the Soviet Government which (1) has always been the principal advocate of the elimination of military bases as an essential step towards disarmament and the reduction of international tension; (2) has repeatedly complained and is still complaining (see Khrushchev's message to Kennedy of 27 October) that the United States and its allies have established military bases around the Soviet Union; (3) has long maintained that by the establishment of military bases on the territory of other states, the sovereignty of these states has been compromised; (4) has often issued stern warnings to countries which have allowed the stationing of nuclear weapons and means of their delivery on their territories.

During the past few years, the stability of the military balance has had the effect of reducing the apprehension over bases. As Mr. Aiken said last week in the Security Council, "for several years no new foreign military bases have been established throughout the world. Many of us were beginning to hope that all the greater Powers, realizing the immense responsibilities which the possession of nuclear armaments imposes, were seeking ways of withdrawing from foreign bases wherever they could, thereby relieving the tension which the maintenance of such bases tends to prolong." (S/PV. 1023, pp. 48-50). In this connexion he noted that "small countries, by allowing new military, and particularly nuclear, bases on their national territories may upset the world's strategic balance and add greatly to existing tensions." (Id., pp. 53-55).

In the Security Council debate, it was logical for Mr. Zorin to raise the question of U.S. overseas bases. In his reply, Mr. Stevenson described the U.S. position thus: "The fact is that there are missiles, comparable to those being placed in C. a, with the forces of only three of our Allies. ^{3/} They were established

^{3/} They are the United Kingdom, Italy and Turkey. The U.S. has nearly 70 bases in West Europe and North Africa but only three, as already noted, are for intermediate range ballistic missiles. The remainder are conventional depots for naval, army and air forces and for supplies. In Turkey there is a squadron of 15 Jupiter IRBM's of 1,500-mile range; in Italy there are 2 squadrons with 30 Jupiters. The 60 Thor IRBM's in Britain are said to have become obsolete and it is reported that they will be "phased out" in 1964. It is reported that there are 8 nuclear submarines, each equipped with 16 Polaris missiles, deployed in West European waters and that number will have grown to about 40 by the end of 1963. The U.S. Strategic Air Command has 4 advance bases for nuclear bombers in Britain and 3 in Spain. (The Sunday Times, 28 October 1962)

there only by a decision of the Heads of Government meeting (of the NATO countries) in December 1957, which was compelled to authorize such arrangements by virtue of a prior Soviet decision to introduce its own missiles capable of destroying the countries of Western Europe". (S/PV. 1025, p.6).

When, on 27 October, Mr. Khrushchev suggested to Mr. Kennedy that Soviet nuclear missiles could be removed from Cuba in return for similar action by the United States in Turkey, the official reply from the White House was that "concerning the security of nations outside this hemisphere, the United States and its Allies have long taken the lead in seeking properly inspected arms limitation on both sides. These efforts can continue as soon as the present Soviet-created threat is ended." This has been interpreted to mean that the United States and its allies would be prepared to consider this question if it were brought up in a different context at a later date.

No one can say whether in the future the Soviet Union will raise the question of nuclear missile bases in Turkey in connexion with the general question of the elimination of overseas bases, as she has often done in the past, or whether she will prefer to present it in a more limited context.

Certainly, the case of Cuba tends to give force to a demand for the elimination of nuclear missile bases overseas. And if the Soviet Union were to propose the dismantling of those missile bases which are close to its frontiers as a measure distinct from the broader question of overseas bases, such proposal would probably meet with much greater understanding in the West. 4/

4/ Here are some typical comments from Western sources: 1. On 24 October a leading article in The London Times raised the question: "What About American Missile Bases on Russia's Frontier?" The paper went on to say: "In spite of all the differences between America's and Russia's records and motives - America's allies are well aware of them - there is just enough similarity in the siting of some of the bases to cause the question to be raised." On 26 October the same paper stated: "Comparisons between the Cuban and the Turkish bases are hotly and quite rightly resented by most Americans. The history and the whole context are, indeed, different. Even so a case can be made for banishing offensive missiles from each base." 2. Walter Lippmann (New York Herald Tribune, 25 October) noted that "The only base that is truly comparable with Cuba is Turkey, because this is the only place where there are strategic weapons right on the frontier of the Soviet Union." According to Lippmann there was an additional similarity between Cuba and Turkey. In his words, "The Soviet missile base in Cuba, like the U.S.-NATO base in Turkey is of little military value. The Soviet military base in Cuba is defenceless and the base in Turkey is all but obsolete. The two bases could be dismantled without altering the world balance of power". 3. The Guardian (24 October) pointed out that, as a result of the Cuban crisis, Mr. Khrushchev could now make the maximum use, inside the United Nations and outside it, of a comparison between American and Soviet missile bases and suggested that if the Soviet leader wanted a serious discussion of the future of military bases, "it ought to be in and through the 18-Nation Committee established by the United Nations." 4. The Manchester Guardian Weekly (25 October) expressed the view that conceivably Mr. Khrushchev had begun to build missile bases in Cuba "primarily to demonstrate...the meaning of American bases close to Soviet territory." 5. In the current issue of The New Statesman Kingsley Martin wrote that "one of the few possibilities in this grim situation is that neutral

(cont.) pressure might be used to persuade both sides to renounce nuclear bases on each other's frontier." 6. In a message to President Kennedy, Lord Russell asked: "Could you accept United Nations inspection of bases and offer bases in Turkey in exchange? The removal of any bases from Russian perimeter would immensely strengthen America's stand on behalf of peace and would bring comparable Soviet response." 7. The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the U.S. (Arthur Lichtenberger) stated that the elimination of Soviet bases in Cuba and the United States in Turkey would be a step towards reducing tensions and might help the course of general disarmament.

CR. 13 (4-59)

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